

PRESS RELEASE
20 May 2010

IMPACT members cycle from Dublin to Kilkenny in aid of Susie Long Hospice Fund

Ten members of the IMPACT trade union cycled from Dublin to their annual conference in Kilkenny this week to raise funds and awareness for the Susie Long Hospice Fund, Our Lady's Hospice in Harold's Cross and the St Francis Hospice in Raheny in Dublin. Led by trade union officials Eamonn Donnelly, Dessie Robinson and local member Martin Bridgeman, the cyclists completed the 80 mile (120km) journey in great time, arriving in Kilkenny at 5pm on Wednesday.

This year's cycle followed a similar undertaking in 2008 when two IMPACT officials raised over EUR10,000.00 for suicide prevention groups in Dublin and Kilkenny. This year, the union was determined to get more members involved and the group of ten trained very hard to get fit and raise the much-needed cash. In addition to securing sponsorship before the cycle, many delegates, on hearing of the challenge, gave considerable donations over the course of the conference.

Speaking after the cycle, Eamonn Donnelly said "We really enjoyed the cycle event two years ago, so it made sense to get more IMPACT conference delegates on their bikes this time. We're raising money for three very hard-working hospice charities and we really enjoyed the road adventure at the same time".

Dessie Robinson added "There was a huge amount of interest in the cycling trip to conference the last time, so we put the challenge out there to our union colleagues. It made the whole experience even more enjoyable, and having more cyclists involved should mean we raise more funds".

Local IMPACT member Martin Bridgeman, who completed the cycle and was instrumental in securing support for the Susie Long Hospice Fund, said "Each of the charities is doing great work for such a worthy cause. I'm really pleased that the guys chose the Susie Long Hospice Fund as their local charity to support on this cycle, as we cannot stress often enough how important it is to have a hospice for the people of Kilkenny and Carlow. We're really happy to play our part in making this goal a reality".

Maeve Butler and Tommy Roche of the Susie Long Hospice Fund Committee met the cyclists on their final break along the journey when they stopped in Castlecomer on Wednesday afternoon. Addressing the group, Maeve Butler said "Congratulations on your fantastic achievement today. The cycle from Dublin to Kilkenny was a considerable undertaking and we are so grateful to you for nominating the Susie Long Hospice Fund as one of your beneficiary charities this year. We greatly appreciate what you have done and the money you raise will go a long way towards realising our goal of building a hospice for the people of Kilkenny and Carlow".

IMPACT has over 1,000 members in Kilkenny and regularly holds conferences here. IMPACT is Ireland's largest public service trade union, with over 65,000 members in health, local authorities, the civil service, education, community organisations and private and semi-state companies. Anyone who wishes to support the hospice charities nominated to benefit from the IMPACT cycle can send cheques, made payable to 'IMPACT Conference Charity Cycle' to Carol Foster, IMPACT, Nerney's Court, Dublin 1 or email pledges to cfoster@impact.ie Every donation will be receipted.

The Susie Long Hospice Fund (SLHF) was set up in October 2007 to provide the highest possible quality of end-of-life care for patients and their families through the establishment of a 10-bed hospice in Kilkenny, for the people of Kilkenny and Carlow. The Fund is meeting this challenge through fundraising, increasing awareness of the need and benefits of local hospice care and by lobbying Government for support. Donations can be made directly to the fund at AIB, High St, Kilkenny, Account No: 3462705, Sort code: 93-31-98. The Susie Long Hospice Fund is a registered charity, number CHY17950. Further details from www.susielonghospice.com

ENDS